

THE MUSICAL WORLD,

A WEEKLY RECORD OF

Musical Science, Literature, and Intelligence.

To know the cause why music was ordained;
Was it not to refresh the mind of man,
After his studies or his usual pain?
Then give me leave to read philosophy,
And, while I pause, serve in your harmony.
TAMING OF THE SHREW.

MAY 19, 1837.

No. LXII.—VOL. V.

PRICE 3d.

JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH, & GEO. FREDERIC HANDEL.

BY HENRY JOHN GAUNTLETT.

JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH, AND GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL severally founded a new school of invention, and established and endowed it with volumes of the most sublime and original compositions that ever enriched musical literature;—compositions that not only cast into the shade all contemporary ecclesiastical music, but even, in their leading and prominent features, have never been excelled by subsequent authors. Amidst a glorious band, many of whom must ever command the admiration of posterity, the two chiefs towered above their fellows “in shape and gesture proudly eminent:” engaged in one common cause, animated by an unexampled fervour and enthusiasm, inspired by a never failing fancy and genius, with spirits stirring, hearts full, and hands not idle, they explored regions, and threw open new scenes of bright and varied character, which must ever embalm their memory in the breast of all who possess a love for religion, philosophy, or true genius.

Of the lives of these two heroes of the great school of Protestant Church music, that of Handel is universally known, and it forms a bright page in the history of our country. The greater part of this composer's unusually extended life, was passed in this metropolis, and the generation has but just gone by, that forms the link between ourselves and those who lived in his immediate presence. In any country he would have formed a class or species by himself, would have commenced and perfected his own era; but, through peculiar and fortunate circumstances the wide range he took in the development of his powers, gave his productions an immediate force and ascendancy; a pre-eminence, a lasting influence, which is so complete, perfect, and universal, that it would seem no composer could add to or diminish. But if of Handel it may be said (as it has been said of Shakspeare) that he was a luminary which “drew after him a third part of the heavens,” of his not less illustrious contemporary, John Sebastian Bach, it may be observed, as it has been of Milton “his soul was like a star, and dwelt apart.” Handel immediately commanded the attention and reverence which his talents so justly merited, amidst the loud acclamations of theatrical audiences.

VOL. V.

Bach's genius was devoted to the service of the sanctuary ; where, however great may be the physical pleasure or the intellectual enjoyment resulting from musical composition, the composer is unseen ; outward admiration of his work is forbidden ; and the more perfect his skill, the more will the feelings of the worshipper be absorbed in high and holy thoughts, utterly at variance with that generous enthusiasm, that self-abandonment, shewn to the musician who sways the passions of his auditors at will, amidst the brilliant scenes of a concert room, or the gorgeous details of a dramatic spectacle.

In this country, Handel's compositions have ever been remembered with pride, and performed with a resolution to admire them. On the other hand, if those of his contemporary Bach have been esteemed, they have not been loved ; and although, in the present day, they extort general praise, they have yet to afford general gratification. But I have no hesitation in saying, that this circumstance reflects no discredit on the musical taste of our country. For a long time both Handel and Bach were unknown and unappreciated by their own countrymen ; and to this day the French and Italians know neither. As they are the two fundamental pillars of the Protestant church music in the concerted style, by which I mean church music with instrumental accompaniment, it is not a matter of surprise that the not over-liberal Catholic should view them with suspicion and distrust. In Germany, Bach as an organ performer and composer, has always maintained his unrivalled superiority ; and the great theorists of that country are loud in his praise. Matheson readily admits that Handel, on the organ, was his inferior. Marpurg says of him, that he was many great musicians in one ; and equally profound in science, and fertile in fancy, as he was in taste easy and natural. Kernberger, his pupil, considers him the greatest master of harmony that ever flourished in any age or country ; and Reichardt observes of him, that no composer of any nation, not even the most gifted Italian, so exhausted every possibility of harmony. But, with the exception of Reichardt, these profound theorists were unacquainted with the church compositions of Handel, and it has been reserved for a later age to weigh with greater accuracy the respective merits of these giants in the art. The strong tide of feeling which has recently been turned towards a consideration of Bach's vocal works, may be traced to the acute criticisms of a Zelter, and the care with which he imbued the mind of his pupil Mendelssohn in Bach's rich and strange characteristics ;—a study, the effects of which are undeniably apparent in almost every page of Mendelssohn's recent and extraordinary composition, the oratorio of 'St. Paul.' John Sebastian Bach is the model, and indeed the idol, of Mendelssohn : and this undisguised reverence, emanating from one on whom has fallen the mantle of Beethoven, has had its effect, in turning the attention of his countrymen to the fountain from which he has drank so deeply. In England, Bach's vocal works have yet to make their way, and occupy that proud situation which their merits unquestionably will ultimately insure them. The intelligent Raumer, in his 'Letters on England in 1835,' when speaking of Handel and Bach, observes, "When the English shall equally appreciate the second giant, the Michael Angelo of his age, John Sebastian Bach, and not before, they will stand so firmly, that no swell of a newly fangled torrent will be able to overthrow and carry them away."

Handel and Bach were born within about a year of each other: the former in February 1684, the latter in March 1685. Handel's father was a physician; Bach's was composer to the Duke of Eisenach, and descended from a race already celebrated, through several generations, for great musical talent. Both Handel and Bach were distinguished for the early development of extraordinary genius, and a no less unwearied and energetic application. The parents of both appear to have been men of considerable intellectual endowments, but possessed of no patrimony, and altogether dependent upon their professional exertions for their own subsistence and that of their families. The early days of Handel passed over in one unclouded sunshine. At the age of seven, his performance on the organ attracted attention in the highest quarters, and he was placed under Zachau, the organist of Halle. Under this good man, he so profited, that when nine years of age, he attempted the composition of motetts for the service of the church, and he continued, until he was twelve years old, to write a choral motett every week, a strong proof of his precocity and that energy of character for which he was in after-life so celebrated. The childhood of Bach was equally remarkable for wonderful indications of genius, and the most intense application; but the boy had to struggle through scenes of misfortune, and meet the envy of one who should have proved his best and warmest friend. At a very early age he lost his mother, and before he was ten years old was left fatherless; an elder brother, who was also an organist, received the child into his house, and continued the instructions his father had begun. One anecdote yet remains which shews the love young Sebastian entertained for the science he lived to exalt, and the untiring perseverance which marked his character at this tender age. The pieces which his brother gave him to practise, though by no means easy, were so soon mastered by the young musician, that he would often request him with great eagerness to furnish him with lessons much more difficult. He had seen in his brother's house a book containing the most celebrated compositions of the old clavi-chord masters, Froberger, and others, and he continually begged it might be given him, but it was as continually refused. These denials, however, only increased his desire for that musical treasure, and he soon contrived to obtain it without his brother's knowledge. It was locked up in a cupboard which had a lattice door, through the chequers of which his hands were small enough to pass, and as the precious book was only stitched in a wrapper, when he got his hands in he contrived to roll it up and draw it forth. For want of a candle, however, he could only copy it in moonlight nights; yet this did not deter him, and in six months, by these means, he had completed his laborious task. But it did not long remain in his possession; for the brother soon after discovered the copy, and with a pertinacity which almost amounted to cruelty, forced it away from him, and he did not recover it till his protector's death, which occurred in a few months afterwards.

Sebastian now became destitute, and had to rely solely on his own efforts to make his way in the world. His fine voice procured him the situation of choir boy, at St. Michael's, Luneburg. He left the school when about fifteen or sixteen, and at the early age of eighteen, we find

him music-director to the court at Weimar; and, at twenty-two he was so celebrated as to have received offers from most of the large Protestant cities in Germany. He continued in the duke's service for ten years, when he left that appointment, for the situation of chapel-master to prince Leopold, of Anhalt Cothen. Here he staid six years, but the death of Kunhau, led to his taking the office of master to St. Thomas's school at Leipsic, which he retained until his death. He subsequently received the honorary appointments of composer to the king of Poland, and Maestro di Capella from the duke of Weissenfels. In his old age like Handel, he became blind, a consequence of unremitting study. Unlike Handel, however, who was never known to entertain a passion for the sex, Bach was twice married and became the father of no fewer than twenty children. He died in 1750, and Handel survived him nine years. He was a man of grave and serious habits, and of very striking countenance, not unlike that of Lord Lyndhurst.

In continuing a sketch of the progress of Handel's life, we find that at fourteen he lost his father; when he went to Hamburgh, a place then celebrated for its opera, under the management of Keiser. Here he became a violin player in the orchestra. In 1704, when he had arrived at the age of twenty, he produced his first opera, which proving successful, was followed by four others, and the profits attending his exertions enabled him to visit Italy. This had an important effect on his after-life. At Venice, Rome, Naples, Florence, he became acquainted with several eminent composers. After producing three other operas, he returned to Germany, and his merits procured him a pension from the Elector of Hanover, afterwards George I. At the age of twenty-four he came to England for a short time, and finally became a resident here during the remainder of his life. For the first three years he was with the Earl of Burlington, whom he left to become chapel-master to the Duke of Chandos, at Cannons near Edgeware. This circumstance was of importance in after-life, as it led him to turn his attention more particularly to Church music. Here he staid only two years. The next twelve were passed in the theatre. In 1732, when forty-eight years of age, he returned to his early avocations, and commenced the production of his oratorios,—a service he was engaged in until his death in 1759. In his latter years he became blind, but he still maintained his situation before the public. His last appearance was on the 6th of April. He died seven days afterwards. Dr. Warren, who attended him in his last illness, states, that Handel had expressed a wish, for several days before his death, that he might breathe his last on Good Friday, in hope, as he observed, of meeting his Lord and Saviour on the day of his resurrection, meaning the third day, or Easter Sunday following. His wish was fulfilled. Possibly this strong, ardent, and singular desire may have led to the prolongation of his life for some hours.

(To be continued.)

MEMOIRS OF THE BROTHERS MORITZ & LEOPOLD GANZ.

MORITZ GANZ, chamber-musician to His Majesty the King of Prussia, and first violoncellist in the Royal Court Chapel at Berlin, was born at

Mayence in 1804, and received his first instruction in music from his father, who, during several professional tours, earned the well-deserved reputation of being a good master of his instrument. The lad had scarcely attained his eleventh year when the delicacy and facility with which he played, made him an object of general attention. Having at length completed his studies, under that worthy artist, Styastni, at Frankfort on the Maine, he received the appointment of first violoncellist in the orchestra of the National Theatre at Mayence, over which his elder brother, Hof-capellmeister Adolph Ganz, presided. In the year 1826 he was appointed first violoncellist in the Royal Court Chapel at Berlin, a situation which had been held by Dupont, Bernard Romberg, and Max Bohrer, successively. His playing, which triumphs over all difficulties, the powerful and expressive tones which he draws from his instrument, his masterly precision, and, above all, the elegance and liveliness of his performance, have gained for him, not only in Berlin, but also on his various professional journeys, the character of being one of the very first performers on his instrument. As a teacher, also, he has produced some accomplished scholars; and as a tasteful composer for his instrument, he has done good service—several concertos, variations, &c. which he has published, showing that he possesses as much taste and ability, as a composer, as is willingly awarded to him as an artist by all who hear him.

LEOPOLD GANZ, the younger brother of the preceding, holds like him the appointment of Chamber-musician to the King of Prussia, and is at the same time Symphony-director and solo player of the first violin in the Royal Court Chapel at Berlin. He was born at Mayence in 1806, and was at a very early age placed in the orchestra of the theatre of that city, where he received the instructions of one of the most talented pupils of L. Spohr. It was now that he commenced that perfectly combined duet playing with his brother the violoncellist, which could scarcely be otherwise attained than by the uninterrupted union of two brothers, whose minds were equally bent upon the accomplishment of one great object. Their joint performances soon excited the wonder and delight of all who heard them; and in 1826, the brothers entered the Berlin Chapel as chamber-musicians, in the place of the Bohrers, brothers, like themselves, in art as well as in nature; and employed all the time the duties of their situation allowed them, in the production of numerous compositions, by which the younger brother, as well as the violoncellist, gained deserved consideration and renown. After assisting for several years at the celebrated quartett concerts of Möser, Leopold, with the assistance of his brother, ventured to announce morning and evening concerts of a similar nature; the undertaking met with complete success. He has, in conjunction with his brother, written duets for the violin and violoncello, which are not only well adapted to display the powers of their respective instruments, but also answer, in every respect, to our ideas of the nature of what such duets ought to be.

We have spoken so recently of their admirable performances, (No. LX.) at the Philharmonic, as to render any criticism upon their peculiar styles unnecessary.

REVIEW.

A Letter to Jonathan Gray, Gent., Attorney to the Dean and Chapter of York, occasioned by the misrepresentations in his "Letters addressed to the Editor of the Musical World," concerning the York Minster Organ; with an appendix of letters, addressed to and from the very Rev. Dean Cockburn, Lord Scarborough, and Dr. Camidge. By Alexander Maxwell, Executor of the late Mr. Elliot, the organ-builder. A. MAXWELL, BELL-YARD, LINCOLN'S INN.

THE writer of this pamphlet, who is the acting executor of the late Mr. Elliot, has abundantly shewn, in the course of its pages, the impartiality of our report of the trial and reference of the action respecting the York organ, and of our comments on those proceedings, and on Mr. Gray's *post litem* defence of his clients.

The answer of Dean Cockburn, to Mr. Maxwell's application before suit for the balance of the actual cost of the York organ, without reference to profit, contained the remarkable assertion—"I have nothing to do with it." (M. W. vol. iv. p. 66.) To the correctness of this allegation, the payment, by Mr. Gray, of money into court, and the arbitrator's subsequent award, bear very equivocal witness. The Dean in a second letter to Mr. Maxwell, enquires:

'I beg, therefore, to ask of you, why you apply to me—and why you think it right and just, that I should have any trouble or plague about the matter?'

Mr. Maxwell's commentary upon this question is:

'The sequel has shewn that, I had a right and a just claim to trouble him; and on the grounds of moral obligation too, I have still a just claim, which he cannot obliterate by any apology short of satisfaction.'

Mr. Maxwell, in confirmation of the opinion expressed by us, as to the 'whim and caprice' evinced by the manifold changes in the *situation* of the instrument, subjoins the following note:

'Among a multiplicity of passages in Dr. Camidge's letters, the following extracts are specimens of the *whim* and *caprice*, to which the builders were constantly subject. "We have been bothering our brains to little purpose latterly, with our inventions, and getting further from home, as most people do, when they go abroad—we have gone astray." In another he says, "I am certain that an over-anxiety has been getting the better of our discretion." So again, we read in another letter, "These changes and contrivances plague me as they do Mr. Elliot; but still I have the same spirit and desire to do all for the best." In another, Dr. Camidge says, "The moving of the screen wall I have heard, is not determined upon, until the next spring; so truly you said there would be another alteration."'

Mr. Maxwell proceeds to observe:

'Mr. Hill was open and unsuspecting, desirous of executing an unrivalled specimen of mechanical skill, and a display of science in which he is a proficient, he thought nothing of reward but more of fame. He succeeded in his work, the merit of which has been acknowledged and applauded by all those who are capable of appreciating the difficulties of his task. . . . Your curious logic in the science of special pleading, about the corporate seal, may do well enough to cast aside the moral obligation, and distract the reader's attention. . . . When you carry in your bill, to the Dean and Chapter, they have a precedent in your own letters for resisting the payment, which would rather puzzle your ingenuity fairly to set aside.'

Mr. Maxwell demonstrates the unfairness of the charge insinuated by Mr. Gray, that he had entertained a wish to "swell" the outlay incident to the building and erection of the York organ. After various strictures on other portions of his antagonist's pamphlet, he adds :

'Equally unfortunate for your clients are the remarks you make on Dr. Camidge's commission organ, in which your wit and knowledge of the law, appear equally conspicuous, but to great disadvantage. . . . I was under no legal or moral obligation to fulfil a secret contract, which as the executor I could not possibly recognize ; and if there had ever been an obligation for me to discharge it, Dr. Camidge himself had cancelled that obligation. For he represented to the Archbishop of York and to the Dean and Chapter, that he had relinquished *in toto* his commission, in order that the minster organ might be increased and improved. He quietly received the commendations which such liberal conduct would have merited.'

We take leave to insert a passage on this point, from the letter addressed to us by Mr. Greatorex ; a notice of which appeared in No. 58 of the 'Musical World.'

'In my humble judgment,' pertinently observes Mr. Greatorex, 'Dr. Camidge has rather to thank Mr. Gray for his zeal than his discretion on his behalf ; and when his client shall have given some farther explanation on the subject, then (but not till then) may Mr. Hill with propriety be asked, why the Doctor remains without that, which Mr. Gray is pleased to call *his own*. Dr. Camidge (in his evidence) states, that he refused all commission on the instrument. . . . Of this honourable and high-minded resolution, I know that he had the full credit ; he himself, having acquainted the Dean of York, and others, of his resolution. Nay more, happening on one occasion, to have some conversation as to the York organ, with an exalted dignitary of the Church (a prelate as eminent for his virtues as his station) he informed me that Dr. Camidge had represented to him, that he had relinquished his commission on the minster organ, in order that the instrument might have the full benefit of the amount—a determination which was highly commended and appreciated. At this very interview, I had in my pocket a letter from Dr. Camidge to Mr. Hill, threatening him with an action, unless he forthwith furnished him with an organ worth double the amount of his commission : but, from motives for which Dr. Camidge will not condemn me, I did not then produce or allude to his letter. Had he been present, the case would have been different, and I should have required him to give that explanation of the circumstance which I hoped he might be able to furnish, and the absence of which would have left the unfavourable impression, that the organ builders had been practised upon, and the patrons deceived. The voluntary offer of Messrs. Elliot and Hill to build him 'a nice little organ' out of old second-hand instruments, and which would cost them next to nothing, presents no answer to the question. Dr. Camidge owes it to himself to afford the solution.'

We regret that our limits will not allow us to present to our readers a larger portion of Mr. Greatorex's and Mr. Maxwell's letters, which are ably written, and completely exonerate us from the imputations of Mr. Gray. They exhibit, too, a searching investigation into their opponent's premises, and ample proof of the fallacy of his conclusions. Mr. Maxwell thus sums up his case ; and with the extract we must also bring the subject to a close.

'My appeal is now made to the public by a plain narration of facts and data, of which they are the competent judges. To that decision I willingly submit. You may therefore enrol the venerable Dean and his beloved coad-

jutor, Dr. Camidge, in the calendar of the church, as saints if you please, the document may be handed over and preserved for the use of the topographical historians of the county, to prevent its being lost to posterity; but I beg leave to amend the record, by a farther declaration of another fact, that the YORK MINSTER ORGAN HAS BEEN ERECTED CHIEFLY AT THE EXPENSE OF THE LATE MR. THOMAS ELLIOT. . . . and that the result of this boasted arbitration is, TO DEPRIVE TWO FEMALE ORPHANS OF THE MEANS OF THEIR SUBSISTENCE.'

CHITCHAT FROM THE CONTINENT.

Leipsic.—Dr. Mendelssohn Bartholdy's Oratorio of 'Paul,' was performed in the Paul's Church, at Leipsic, on the 16th of March last, with the greatest success, under the direction of the composer. This performance appears to have excited still greater interest, in Leipsic, than was felt last year, when Handel's 'Israel in Egypt,' was given there under the direction also of Mendelssohn. Dr. Fink who has inserted a notice of the musical treat enjoyed by himself and all the lovers of music in that city, concludes as follows:—

"But where is the criticism upon the 'Paul.' Criticism! I have indeed heard the work on the last rehearsal, and on the evening of its performance, and greatly enjoyed it: but I have, of such a work, and of a love of art, generally, a very different notion, than to hold it doing honour either to the composer, or the man who undertakes it, to write a criticism after only twice hearing it, without a perfect and repeated study of the score. Such a judgment much necessarily be partial! It may be injurious, and it cannot be of any advantage, though it sound ever so well. The critique is to come."

Venice.—The Teatro alla Fenice, next to La Scala and San Carlo the most celebrated in Italy, and which was burnt to the ground on the night of the 12th and 13th December last, had fortunately for the proprietor been insured at Milan at the beginning of the month, to a very large amount. This theatre was built in 1790 by the architect Selva, and was opened in the Spring of 1792, with an opera written by Paisiello for the occasion, entitled 'I Giuochi d'Agrigento,' the poetry by Count Alessandro Pepoli. This opera was not, however, successful, although supported by the talents of the celebrated Gaspare Pacchiarotti, and Brigida Banti, and the equally celebrated tenor Giacomo David. The new ballet by Onorato Vigano, entitled 'Serena Regina di Tebe,' was equally unfortunate, though the dancing of the two principal performers, that incomparable couple Salvatore Vigano and his wife Medina, excited the greatest delight. All the artists we have here named have long been dead, but a buffo-dancer, who made his appearance in this ballet, is now alive and in good health at Milan.

CONCERTS.

CLASSICAL CHAMBER CONCERTS, (Second Series, Horn Tavern, Doctors' Commons.)—Just as we thought we had dismissed the Quartett Concerts for the season, here is the second series of another set that has sprung up at the Horn Tavern, Doctors' Commons, the second of which took place on the 10th

inst. as follows :—**PART I.** Quartett in E flat, two violins, viola, and violoncello, Messrs. Dando, J. Banister, Hill, and H. J. Banister; Westrop.—Introduction and Fugue in G minor, pianoforte and double bass, Messrs. T. G. Reed and C. Severn; Bach.—Quartett in D, op. 14, No. 79, two violins, viola, and violoncello, Messrs. J. Banister, Dando, Hill, and H. J. Banister; Haydn.—**PART II.** Quintett in G minor, op. 17, two violins, viola, violoncello, and double bass, Master G. Case, and Messrs. J. Banister, Hill, H. J. Banister, and C. Severn; Onslow.—Quartett in C, op. 43, two violins, viola, and violoncello, Messrs. J. Banister, Dando, Hill, and H. J. Banister; Spohr.—Sonata in A, dedicated to Kreutzer, pianoforte and violin, Messrs. Westrop, and Dando; Beethoven.

Mr. Westrop's Quartett is the same we heard at the British Musicians; and is chiefly remarkable for its Andante, Minuet, and Trio; these last receiving an encore which in truth they well deserve. The Fugue of Seb. Bach is a fine one; the introductory prelude, however, is not one of his happiest, being, as it seemed to us, rather heavy and crude. Haydn's Quartett in D, op. 14, No. 79, followed, with its inspired adagio, which is quite enough to have immortalized the name of its author, if he had never written a note besides. The Quartett should have been placed in the second act; for it in some sort spoiled the ear for what followed. The sonata of Beethoven is a well-known one, and was well played by both parties. Beethoven, with all his faults to answer for, if indeed they be such, is assuredly the Prince of Pianoforte writers; nevertheless we do not see why he should occupy the ground so exclusively in this respect, to the exclusion of Haydn, Dussek, and others that might be enumerated.

SOCIETÀ ARMONICA.—Last Thursday night (the 11th) introduced us to the fourth concert of this society. **PART I.** Symphony, in E flat; Spohr.—Duetto, Sig. Ivanhoff, and Sig. Lablache, 'Li marinari;' Rossini.—Aria, Mme. Albertazzi.—Adagio and Rondo Russe, Violin, Mr. Mori; Mayseder.—Aria, Signor Lablache, 'Largo al factotum;' Rossini.—Duetto, Mme. Albertazzi and Sig. Ivanhoff, 'Mira la biancha Luna;' Rossini.—Overture, (Ruler of the Spirits) Weber.—**PART II.** Overture, op. 124. (The last composition but one of this great master;) Beethoven.—Aria, Sig. Ivanhoff, 'Ah s'ever;' Pacini.—Fantasia, Pianoforte, Mr. Forbes, "upon Scotch airs," (by desire;) Moscheles.—Duetto, Mme. Albertazzi and Sig. Lablache, 'Quanto Amore,' (L'Elisir d'Amore;) Donizetti.—Barcarolla, Sig. Ivanhoff, 'Or che in cielo,' (by desire;) Donizetti.—Overture, (Der Freischutz); Weber.—Leader, Mr. Mori. Conductor, Mr. Forbes.

We know not whether the opening symphony of Spohr is to be classed among his greatest efforts, but excepting the introduction, the two first movements a little disappointed us. The rest however is first-rate. The Minuet and Trio (especially the latter) are quaint and original, and the last movement is a thing of perfect beauty from beginning to end. An apology was made for omitting the duett 'Li Marinari,' on account of the 'indisposition' of Signor Lablache. We will candidly confess that we are accustomed to receive the announcement of an Italian indisposition with suspicion. Lablache, however is not the person to treat the public with unbecoming freaks; and moreover when he did appear, to sing 'Largo al factotum,' he looked as we thought very unwell, although he sang with much spirit and humour. Mr. Mori played his Rondo with great precision. The duett 'Mira la biancha Luna,' is a very pleasing one, and was encored, we are induced to think, from the exquisite singing, especially of Sig. Ivanhoff, which would have obtained the like honor for a composition of far less merit. The overture of Weber which concluded the first act, is well known. It is quite out of the question to speak with confidence, at a first hearing of any of Beethoven's latter works. We shall decline therefore, saying a word about his overture, until we have heard it again.

The first movement of Pacini's aria is a good specimen of him, but it degenerates through the latter part, till it ends in downright trifling. Moscheles' fantasia was well played by Mr. Forbes. The duet, and the barcarolla, which followed, are the popular ones, from 'L'Elisir d'Amore,' and 'Marino Faliero,' and very sweet things they both of them are. The overture to 'Der Freischütz,' which we are never tired of, wound up the concert well.

We have again to compliment the Directors upon the adroitness with which they contrive at once to meet the popular wishes and keep their selections free from dullness and inanity. With the single exception we have named, of a part of Pacini's aria, the music on Thursday night was uniformly excellent. The room was quite full.

SIGNOR PISTRUCCI'S ITALIAN IMPROVIZAZIONE AND CONCERT.—In one of the posthumous volumes of the conversations and writings of the late Mr. Coleridge, we remember meeting with that eminent critic's opinion of Signor Pistrucci's genius and talent. We have searched all the volumes within our reach, but without success in meeting with the passage we refer to. The following we believe to be a *vulgate* translation of the original. It was to the effect, that, "Pistrucci was a poet, who to a genius of a high order, had added a cultivation of the ear, and inventive power, as he believed, unequalled. He was a troubadour—in as much as the troubadours were believed to improvise; musician of a high order; and poet: and that had he been known only in one of these qualifications, he would have excited *less* surprise perhaps, but would not the less have been worthy of *more* admiration."

This gentleman gave the annual exhibition of his remarkable talent on Friday morning last, at the King's Theatre Concert Room, and which was crowded with his friends. The improvisatore, like his predecessors the Troubadours, is accustomed to deliver his thoughts to an instrumental accompaniment. From several subjects that are presented to him, he selects one which best consorts with his fancy, or affection of the moment: and having arranged the metre and stanza in his mind, he hums an air to the accompanying pianist. In two or three seconds he starts off, and rarely pauses or hesitates during the course of many stanzas. One of the subjects selected by him upon the present occasion, was, 'Roma antiqua è moderna;' and we much regret that the distance at which we were removed from the speaker, together with his enunciation not being sufficiently clear and distinct for a foreigner, we missed many fine thoughts; for such we feel assured they were, on account of the sudden, short, and simultaneous bursts of approbation that proceeded from those within ear-shot of his discourse. With one or two pauses only, for, perhaps, the duration of a second, his ode consisted of one continuous flow of thought for several minutes: and, as he warmed into his subject, he increased the time of the accompaniment; till, like one of the prophets of old, the divine afflation appeared to agitate his whole frame, and he ended in a sort of intellectual paroxysm.

It has been observed that metrical improvisation in the Italian language is comparatively an easy task, on account of the facilities offered by the words all ending in open vowels; and this is true so far as the mere effort of rhyming extends: but this, nevertheless, is a minor portion of the task—ideas, original, apt, brilliant, and continuous, are the grand desiderata upon such an occasion; and these we apprehend Signor Pistrucci has in a very eminent degree at his command. We are not without our own Troubadours. The editor of the *New Monthly Magazine*, (Mr. Theodore Hook) possesses a very remarkable talent of the same description. He is accustomed to accompany himself on the pianoforte, and to extemporise upon every member of his company with felicitous humour. Several years ago, upon such an occasion, one of his hosts—(two brothers,) happened to be absent from the room, and upon his return regretting the treat he had lost, Mr. Hook imme-

diately volunteered to indemnify him, and proceeded through a series of a dozen or fourteen verses, each ending with a pun upon his name—D. Kay. In another instance, the following among other verses on the whole company present, was made upon the spur of the moment. The name of the party was *Winter*, and one of his occupations, that of *Tax-Collector*.

"Next comes Mr. Winter, collector of taxes,
To whom you must pay whatever he axes;
And immediately too—without any flummery:
For though he's called *Winter*, his acts are all *Summery*."

To return to Signor Pistrucci. The concert which accompanied his improvisation was but mediocre. Mme. Degli Antonj was encored in Bellini's aria 'Se Romeo,' which she sang with great brilliancy of tone and animation; and the clever youth Giulio Regondi was warmly applauded for his performance on the guitar. We did not remain till the conclusion of the entertainment.

MME. BONNIAS'S CONCERT.—On Friday evening this lady gave a concert in Willis's great room, which was filled to the back. But with the exception of the fair *bénéficiaire's* performance on the pianoforte, (she is a distinguished player); Mozart's 'Porgi Amor,' nicely sung by Miss Beale; and one or two other pieces, we are compelled to say that the whole was but a mediocre affair:—however, to repeat an observation which we have already made upon a similar occasion; if ladies and gentlemen can assemble their friends in such crowds, at a small expense;—as men of the world, if not as "Censors general," we shall decline entering any protest against their management—although we would prefer not being requested to give any opinion upon their concerts. We did not stop to hear a 'Hommage à Malibran,' composed for two pianos, harp, and seraphine, by Sig. Alari.

KING'S THEATRE.—Saturday night being Whitsun eve, a selection of music was performed here. Beethoven's magnificent symphony in C minor, was well played and well received. We will yield to none in our admiration of this symphony, minuet and trio included, but there are some things in the last movement which we shall be glad to understand better than we do at present. A quartett which followed is not so good a specimen of Rossini as the one that came after it with the harp accompaniment; 'Mi manca la voce.' Rubini has made 'Il mio tesoro' his own, and certainly nothing can surpass his style of singing it. It was encored as usual. The performance of "The Horse and his Rider" was diverting. Scarcely had the chorus proceeded ten bars, when the audience discovered what a contemptible affront was being offered to their common sense (of hearing). No sooner had Mrs. Wood completed her two brief solos, than the hisses increased to a hurricane. Costa abruptly left the orchestra with Mrs. Wood; and the band and chorus simultaneously stopped; Mori alone kept his way single-handed. Hereupon the hisses were converted into merriment. Mori however persevered, and contrived at last to revivify the band; the chorus was finished amid a storm of disapprobation and laughter. Our readers are familiar with the noises the frozen-out gardeners make about the streets in winter—that was about the thing. The overture to 'William Tell' was encored, as it always is here. This overture is surely no "mere noisy pasticcio," as it has been called. Noisy enough it certainly is, but it abounds in brilliant effects, and then how exquisitely managed is the Swiss melody in it. The exertion to the singer alone prevented Mme. Albertazzi being called upon for the repetition of an aria. After the scene from the Corinto, ('The benediction of the banner,') which was a fine one, we came away, leaving a large portion of the second act behind us. It was then eleven o'clock—the time at which the concert was advertized to conclude. The house was full, but not crowded.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—The sixth concert of the season, which took place last Monday, was, with a trifling exception, one of the very best we ever attended. The performance was worthy of the selection, and that will speak for itself. Act I. Sinfonia in C minor, Beethoven; cantata, Mr. Phillips, 'Napoleon's Midnight Review,' the Chevalier Neukomm; concerto, piano-forte, Madame Dulcken, F. Mendelssohn Bartholdy; scena, Miss Clara Novello, 'Deh parlate,' (Il Sacrificio d'Abramo) Cimarosa; Introduction and Fugue for full orchestra, never performed in this country, Mozart. Act II. sinfonia in A, composed for the Philharmonic Society, F. Mendelssohn Bartholdy; scena, Madame Schroeder Devrient, 'Wie nahte mir der Schlummer, (Der Freyschütz) Weber; fantasia, horn, Signor Puzzi, Costa; terzetto, Madame Schroeder Devrient, Miss Clara Novello, and Mr. Phillips, "Coraggio" (Fidelio) Beethoven; Overture, "Oberon," Weber. Leader, Mr. Mori; Conductor, Mr. Potter. What various beauty is concentrated in that C minor symphony! what originality and majesty in the introduction! what a lofty and sweet pathos and richness in the andante—worthy to accompany the epithalamium of the "King of Gods and men." And how delightfully is this smoothly flowing melody relieved by the vivacious scherzo. Is it irrational, by the way, to surmise that the two last movements in this noble symphony were intended to represent the primitiveness of rural pleasures interrupted, and carried away by the inroad of a martial battalion? We fancied the picture while the rustic dance of the scherzo was going on, borne down as it is, without coming to a regular close, by the sudden opening of that tremendous pomp of sound, like the irruption of a mighty host, with

"Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear."

Some such idea, we believe, crossed the mind of the musician; for be it remembered, that after this gorgeous procession has passed on for a time, the rustic dance is again recurred to for a few bars, and is quickly overwhelmed in the flood of that majestic harmony. The whole of this last movement is so overpowering in its appeal, that those faculties must be somewhat inert, that are not rendered unsteady by the impulse. In the second part of the scherzo, Dragonetti led off that remarkable passage with unwonted vigour—even for him.

The Chevalier Neukomm's cantata is perhaps the best of his single vocal compositions. The instrumentation is effective in various parts. Madame Dulcken had an immense reception for the very able manner in which she played Mendelssohn's grand concerto. Energy, vigour, and brilliancy, are the leading characteristics of her style. Miss Clara Novello was completely successful in the scena from the "Sacrificio d'Abramo;" and in this opinion we are borne out by that of all the best judges in the room, both professional and amateur. Her energy and expression are increasing daily: her style and execution (in that song, at all events) are at present unexceptionable. The introduction and fugue by Mozart has very much the air of the old school; and it is as close and logical as the very best. It is an exquisite piece of counterpoint throughout. We should like to know whether the instrumentation is entirely his own; because in certain points it appeared questionable. Much of Mozart's music is yet to be heard "for the first time in this country." Mendelssohn's sinfonia is a most masterly composition from beginning to end. It did not receive full justice in the performance. The greater part of the symphony is no doubt 'Caviare to the general;' but Mendelssohn thinks of the *particular*—and not of the "general," when he sits down to write. The closeness with which he has worked his subjects in the piece under consideration, and the admirable manner in which he has treated them for the various classes of instruments, are perfectly delightful. The andante—a plaintive, simple old ditty, is a most exquisite melody; such a one as

Isabella might have sung, weeping, over her "pot of sweet Basil." Although we prefer Madame Schroeder on the stage, yet she puts so much heart in her voice wherever she exhibits, that we willingly overlook inaccuracies in intonation. Signor Puzzi's performance was eminent—the composition naught. The trio from *Fidelio* was not quite the thing. Mr. Phillips appeared not only languid, but as if he were feeling his way with the music. The overture to *Oberon* was played with perfect precision and expression.

M. THALBERG'S CONCERT.—The great concert room of the King's Theatre, the orchestra, and ante-room, were all crowded on Wednesday morning to witness this very extraordinary musician's performances; no repetition of which, brings one any nearer to a solution of the manner in which he accomplishes the majority of those astounding "tours de force:" and even a description of their effect is almost as hopeless an attempt. While he was going on with a series of varied accompaniments upon a noble *canto fermo*, that would require four first-rate hands to do them justice; and with a tranquillity of manner almost as surprising as the performance, we were forcibly reminded of a zealously irreverend speech, made by a German (Germans in their enthusiasm are usually so) to Coleridge, who had been branching out in his marvellous way upon the Kantesian Philosophy. When he had finished his two or three hours oration, the listener drew back, and lifting up hands and eyes, exclaimed "Vwhy!—you are Got!—you are Got!" Indeed, some of Thalberg's achievements approach the miraculous. He is blest in the first instance with a finely organized brain; an equalized power of finger, almost unexampled; and a vigour and elasticity of wrist such as we suspect cannot be paralleled: hence the facility with which he executes those prodigiously rapid staccato passages in chords; and equally with either hand. No difference here can possibly be discerned. One variation on the air of 'God save the king,' played all in chords with the left hand, and at a greatly accelerated time, while the right was playing a host of coruscations—every now and then like lightening, reversing the positions of the *canto fermo*, and at the same time the character of the accompaniments; was one of the most amazing feats we ever witnessed. His exhibitions too, great and confounding as they are, are not mere tumbler's tricks—things surprising, but irrational: his music is good. It is evident from the style of his subject (when he takes an original one) that he is familiar with Sebastian Bach. This was the case in the first piece he played on Wednesday; a new capriccio. His second was a fantasia, in which he introduced variations upon the national anthem, and 'Rule Britannia;' a large portion of which we suspect was extemporaneous: and his last, the variations upon some airs in the 'Mose in Egitto.'

It would be of little use taking lessons from Monsieur Thalberg, unless the tutor can supply hands and wrists, with the instruction as to his mode of performing his studies. The concert was altogether a delightful one. The principal opera singers assisted: and in addition, Monsieur Labarre played a 'Nocturne Espagnole' on the harp. We have never been so reconciled to this instrument as by the performance and music of this refined musician. A Monsieur Franchomme also played a fantasia on the violoncello. He possesses a grand tone with a free and commanding bow, and exhibits no nonsense or trickery in his playing. His music too, was of a good class. In the course of the piece he introduced variations on the "Last rose of summer," and his manner of announcing the theme was one of the most graceful pieces of expression we have heard for some time. Monsieur Franchomme is a first-rate master of his instrument. The conclusion of the concert, which was Monsieur Thalberg's last performance, was followed by a storm of bravos, waving of hats, handkerchiefs, and approbation of all sorts,—a genuine homage to genius. His second concert will be on the 21st June.

ANCIENT CONCERTS.—The sixth meeting took place on Wednesday, under the direction of Lord Burghersh. The vocalists were **THE PASTA**, Mesdames Bishop, Seguin, A. Shaw, Birch, and F. Wyndham. Messrs. Hawkins, Lloyd, Pyne, Parry, jun. Phillips, and Braham. The selection, which was more varied and more properly becoming this Association than any yet exhibited, embraced the names of Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Gluck, Winter, Paesello, Jomelli, Cimarosa, Guglielmi, &c. &c. The singing of Pasta, æsthetically considered, was in parts magnificent; but the intonation often very unsound; a circumstance which might have arisen from her previous exertions elsewhere, and change of the atmosphere experienced in going from one place to the other. The audience was unusually numerous and brilliant.

THEATRES.

DRURY LANE.—Mme Schræder appeared on Monday in the part of Fidelio, and for the first time in English. Her reception was quite equal to her deserts; but the whole performance is vastly inferior to the first season's performance of the opera, when Mr. Monck Mason had the Italian Opera House; and when the glorious actress was so finely supported.

Mme. Pasta's engagement at this house, instead of a theatrical exhibition, which has been prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain, is changed into that of singing opera airs between the dramatic pieces of the evening. A performance of this sort took place on Wednesday. The lady was assisted by Mme. Giannoni, Messrs. Curioni and Seguin. Signor Puzzi also played a solo on the horn. At no time of her career did Mme. Pasta give us much pleasure as a concert singer; and now, that her voice has deteriorated, and her vitiated style remains unimpaired, we feel little else but pain and regret. "Parce, parce precor, non sum qualis eram," should now be her motto:—

"Spare me, ah spare! I've not the lofty tone-a,
As in the first season of my Deademona."

By thoughtlessly rushing away at the conclusion of the first act, we missed the performance of the new double bass player.

REVIEW.

A very ancient German Christmas Carol. The melody harmonized, and the words translated, for the use of Madrigal and Choral Societies, by R. L. Pearsall (of Willsbridge) Esq. op. 10, 1836. D'ALMAINE.

THIS is a most interesting musical relique—interesting from its antiquity; for in a short introduction, Mr. Pearsall has observed that in the copy of an old German protestant ritual, dated 1570, from whence he extracted it, it is there designated as, "A very ancient song for Christmas Eve:" but it is greatly more interesting, from its beautiful melody; and which Mr. Pearsall has harmonized in an admirable manner: first in quartett, and subsequently for semi-chorus in eight parts, supported at intervals by the full chorus. We recommend this little piece to our amateur friends of the "Choral Harmonic Society," at Exeter Hall. With their three hundred voices, and precise attention to the pianos and fortes, the effect, we are certain, would be most impressive. How finely, too, it would go in the Birmingham Hall.

Mr. Pearsall has evinced considerable taste as well as judgment in the manner in which he has brought forward this charming antique.

The river spirit's song. A Madrigal for four voices by R. L. Pearsall (of Willsbridge) Esq. op. 20. 1836. DITTO.

Here the same tasteful musician appears to advantage in the character of an original composer. The Madrigal is written in the pure style of that class of

composition: the harmonies are unexceptionable; and the points are close, and all taken up with excellent spirit. The treatment of the words, 'We'll beat the waters till they bound, and circle round,' is both graceful and expressive.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SIGNOR MORANDI, an eminent performer on the Harp, and who has acquired much fame both in Germany and Paris, has arrived in London.

SEBASTIAN BACH'S CONCERTOS.—Mr. Moscheles has followed up the introduction of this great master's pianoforte music to the musical public, by an announcement of the intended performance of the triple concerto in D minor. To hear Sebastian decently played is delightful under any circumstances; but to see such musicians as Thalberg, Benedict, and Moscheles, simultaneously engaged in pouring forth one unceasing torrent of harmony and melody, will be an object of rare and extraordinary interest. Dr. Forkel, in alluding to Bach's two concertos for three pianofortes and orchestra, observes: "Besides the harmonical combination and constant concertation of the three principal instruments—remarkable in these concertos, there is also another feature—a separate and distinct concertation going on between the stringed instruments. The art bestowed on these compositions is almost beyond conception. Yet, notwithstanding this elaboration—this profound thought—these movements, (particularly the concerto in D minor) are so delicate and elegant, so expressive and pathetic, and so characteristic and perfect in their outline and colouring, that the composer must have written them as freely and readily as if he had only a simple melody to manage." Bach wrote also concertos for four pianofortes.

CONTRA-BASSO.—A gentleman has just arrived in London, who, it is said, performs in a most extraordinary manner on this unwieldy instrument; he executes not only violoncello but violin passages with the greatest rapidity; and he manages the harmonies in a curious way, by bringing his left hand over the finger board (and resting the double bass on his knee) as violoncello players do, making a bridge with his thumb, so as to shorten the length of the strings. He played at Drury-lane on Wednesday.

ST. GEORGE'S CATHOLIC CHAPEL, (London Road, Southwark.) Those who are curious in the old Gregorian Music, will have an opportunity of hearing specimens, well performed at an Evening Service in this Chapel, on Sunday, the 28th. The usual choir will be assisted by Miss Clara Novello, Mrs. Fitzwilliam, Mrs. Serle, &c. &c.

MUSIC AND WAR.—Mr. Robert Sadler, the late organist of the Spital organ, on Wednesday was taken before the magistrates at Worship-street, charged with writing a violent and offensive letter to the rector. It appears he had issued a furious placard, which had been distributed amongst the parishioners and the profession, and followed it up by a still more extraordinary effusion to the clergyman. He subsequently repented himself and wrote an apology: and on expressing his contrition before the magistrates and holding out overtures of peace, the rector refrained from pressing the charge, and Mr. Sadler was discharged.

Operas, Concerts, &c. for the ensuing week.

- Saturday, 20th.... King's Theatre, Malek Adel. Drury Lane, Fidelio. St. James's, Eagle's Haunt, every evening. Mr. Neate's 1st Soirée, Hanover Square.
 Monday, 22nd.... Drury Lane, Mme. Schröder. 5th Società Armonica, King's Theatre. Ancient Concert. Rehearsal, Hanover Square, Evening. Mr. Salaman's Concert, Hanover Square, Evening.
 Tuesday, 23rd.... King's Theatre, Malek Adel.

Wednesday, 24th..Seventh Ancient Concert, Hanover Square. Classical Instrumental Concert, Horn Tavern, Doctors Commons, Evening.
 Thursday, 25th ..King's Theatre. Drury Lane, Mme. Schroeder.
 Friday, 26th.....Mme. Dulcken's Concert, King's Theatre, Morning. Sacred Harmonic Society, Messiah, Exeter Hall, Evening.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Viola (of Glasgow) next week.
An Amateur Flute Player will find a letter at the Skipton-in-Craven post office, by the time he will read this notice.

Veritas—in the first vacant space.

The Shrewsbury Choral Society, next week, if possible.

Errata.—Page 140, four lines from the bottom, for *amateur heretics*, read *amateur societies*; and page 142, line 21, for *with*, read *without*.

'Oh here's to the holly!' published by Mr. MASON, and not Mr. T. E. Purday, as stated in last week's review.

WEEKLY LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

PIANO-FORTE.

Bennett's Chorussees for Organ or Piano-forte. Boyce's Funeral March, and Naumann's Quartett "Sons of Zion".....CHAPPELL
 Coote's Quadrilles from the opera of Norma.....OLLIVIER
 ——— Waltz on Beilini's Duet "In mia man alfin".....DITTO
 Cserny. Teatro Buffo Londini, No. 4. Fantasia from "Un'Aventura di Scaramuccia"....WESSEL
 Diabelli. Companion for Leisure Hours, Book 4.....DITTO
 Gentleman Jack Quadrilles, containing "A place in thy memory" DEAN
 Herz (H.) Mehul's Overture to Stratonice.....CHAPPELL
 Jack Brag Quadrilles, containing "The charming woman".....DEAN
 Lemoine. "Les Soirées de Londres, No. 16. Easy Quadrilles, as Duets, "L'Enfautin"....WESSEL
 ——— Ditto, No. 17. Easy Quadrilles, "Le Mignon"....DITTO
 Medley Overture, "Flight to America," containing the popular Negro Melodies, and Cachucha Dance.....DEAN
 Osborne. Three Rondinos from "L'Eclair".....CHAPPELL
 Pickwick Quadrilles. G. Weipert.....T. E. PURDAY
 Phipps (C. M.) Introd. and brill. Vars. on an original Air.....TOLKEIN
 Rimbault (E. J.) Fantasia, in commemoration of the 24th May, 1837, the expiration of the minority of H.R.H. the Princess Victoria.....D'ALMAINE
 Taglioni's Pas de Deux, from "La Sylphide".....JEFFERTS
 The Princess Victoria's Birth-day Quadrilles. F.C. Noble.....WYBROW
 The Eagle's Haunt. F. Gläser, arranged for Piano-forte.....EWER

VOCAL.

Eagle's Haunt. Trio. "When winter comes." Bacchanalian Trio, "With bottle in hand." Romance, "Poor girl, she weeps." Song, "Woman's love should ne'er be told." Sestett, with Prayer, "Now all is right."

Duet, "But I shall ever mindful be." Chorus, "Now my heart bounds".....WESSEL
 Herne, the hunter. Song by Lady Frederick Gordon.....CHAPPELL
 I will bring thee fairest flowers. N.J. Spörle.....T. E. PURDAY
 Let us drink to old friends. J. Blewitt.....DITTO
 My companions are wanted. Grand Scena from Fra Diavolo.....CHAPPELL
 My fairest, awake! Ballad, J. Hullah.....OLLIVIER
 The dream is past. Composed by Stephen Glover.....FENTUM
 The lawyer's clerk. Comic, composed by James Willie, M.A.DITTO
 The lock of hair. Ditto, J. P. Knight.....OLLIVIER
 The mummy. Comic, W. West T. E. PURDAY
 The Krasnoe Saraphan. Original Russian Melody, adapted to English words.....BOOSEY
 Victoria, England's daughter. Music by a Peer of the Realm.....WYBROW
 ——— Glee. S. Nelson.....T. E. PURDAY
 Why, mamma, should I not love. Miss Single.....HOLLOWAY

FOREIGN VOCAL.

O mattutini albori.....PLATTS
 MISCELLANEOUS.
 Bochsá. Reliques Irlandaises, favourite Irish Strains, arranged in an agreeable and effective style, 3 Books, for Harp.....D'ALMAINE
 Chatterton (J. B.) the Cachoucha, Madlle. Duvernay's, arranged for Harp Solo.....BOOSEY
 Berbiguier Fantasia for Flute and Piano-forte, on subjects from "Les deux Reines".....HILL
 Crouch. "Tu vedrai" arranged for Violoncello and Piano-forte CHAPPELL
 Lightfoot (F.) Progressive Duets for Harp and Piano-forte, very easy.....DEAN
 Loder (J. D.) First Set of 3 Duets for 2 Violins.....D'ALMAINE
 Onslow's Grand Trio, Piano-forte, Violin, and Violoncello.....BALLS
 Tulou and Herz. Grand Concertante, Vars. on an Air in "La Fiancée," Flute and Piano-forte CHAPPELL